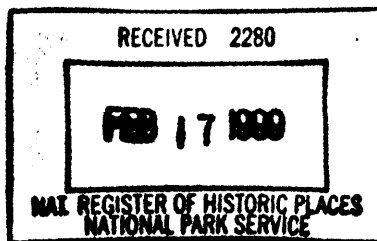


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**



351

1. Name of Property

historic name Automobile Alley Historic District [preferred]

other names/site number Automobile Row

2. Location

street & number North Broadway Avenue from Northwest 4th to West Park Place, and north side of Northwest 10th to one-half block west of North Robinson Avenue not for publication N/A
city or town Oklahoma City vicinity N/A
state Oklahoma code 109 county Oklahoma zip code 73102, 73103

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this XX nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property XX meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide XX locally. (N/A See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

B. J. Wade
Signature of certifying official

25 January 1999
Date

Oklahoma Historical Society, SHPO
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain): _____

Edson H. Ball 3/18/99

Edson H. Ball
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>30</u>	<u>19</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>30</u>	<u>19</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 4

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE
COMMERCE/TRADE
DOMESTIC
RELIGION
DOMESTIC
COMMERCE/TRADE
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION

Sub: specialty store
business
hotel
religious facility
multiple dwelling
department store
manufacturing facility
communications facility

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE
COMMERCE/TRADE
COMMERCE/TRADE
COMMERCE/TRADE
VACANT/NOT IN USE
RELIGION
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION
SOCIAL

Sub: specialty store
business
warehouse
professional

religious facility
industrial storage
civic

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style
Classical Revival
Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
roof ASPHALT
walls BRICK
STONE
other CONCRETE
METAL

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1911 - 1948

Significant Dates

8. Statement of Significance (continued)

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 26.4

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A	<u>14</u>	<u>634880</u>	<u>3927000</u>	C	<u>14</u>	<u>634900</u>	<u>3926820</u>
B	<u>14</u>	<u>634870</u>	<u>3926820</u>	D	<u>14</u>	<u>634900</u>	<u>3926760</u>
	<u>X</u>	See continuation sheet.					

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John R. Calhoun, Associate Planner, R. Brett James, Planning Intern, Planning Department, Jerry Hunter, Associate Planner, Todd Scott, Associate Planner

organization City of Oklahoma City date June 24, 1998

street & number 420 W. Main St. Suite 900 telephone 405 / 297-2110

city or town Oklahoma City state OK zip code 73102-4435

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name See attached list (fewer than fifty owners)

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state ____ zip code _____

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United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section 6, Page 9

Automobile Alley Historic District
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Historic Functions

Cat: DEFENSESub: arms storage

Current Functions

Cat: LANDSCAPE
WORK IN PROGRESSSub: parking lot

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National Park Service
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Section 7, Page 10

Automobile Alley Historic District
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Architectural Classification

Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival
International Style
Art Deco

Materials

foundation	<u>BRICK</u>
	<u>STONE</u>
roof	<u>METAL</u>
walls	<u>STUCCO</u>
	<u>CONCRETE</u>
	<u>METAL</u>
other	<u>WOOD</u>
	<u>STONE</u>
	<u>CLOTH/CANVAS</u>
	<u>CERAMIC TILE</u>
	<u>TERRA COTTA</u>

Summary

The Automobile Alley Historic District consists primarily of commercial buildings built in the 1910s through the 1930s. Located on the north side of downtown Oklahoma City, the district is centered on Broadway Avenue. Broadway Avenue, with a 100-foot right-of-way, was platted as the widest north-south street in the original 1889 townsite plat. Originally part of a residential area adjacent to downtown Oklahoma City, Broadway Avenue redeveloped as a commercial area after 1910 with the majority of businesses related to the new, expanding automobile industry. Although the preponderance of commercial development focused on Broadway Avenue, automobile-related commercial buildings were also constructed on the crossing streets such as Northwest 10th Street. Situated on the north side of downtown, the area remains commercially oriented, although there has been some redevelopment of the area outside of the district, consisting primarily of demolition of historic buildings. The Automobile Alley Historic District is distinct from adjacent historic commercial areas in that the Automobile Alley buildings are generally only one- to two-stories in height and convey an historic association with the automobile industry. Undergoing revitalizing efforts which include several Investment Tax Credit projects, most of the buildings no longer function as originally designed; however, the character of the area has been maintained through the rehabilitation of historic buildings. The district includes 53 buildings, of which four are already listed individually in the National Register, and 30 not previously listed are contributing and 19 noncontributing. The total contributing including the already listed is 34, or 64.2%.

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National Park Service
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Continuation Sheet

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Automobile Alley Historic District
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Description

Most of the 53 buildings of the Automobile Alley Historic District are masonry (usually brick) commercial buildings of the 1910s through the 1930s, with some newer construction up to the early 1980s. The predominant style is Commercial Style, with several buildings of the Classical Revival style.

Most of the buildings have common design characteristics, regardless of style: Their fronts are flush with the sidewalk, at the property line. Their facades occupy the full width of the property; many are also the full depth of their lots, with the back side on the alley. Upper levels have no setbacks. The first floors are at sidewalk level, or elevated perhaps one step. They have flat or balloon roofs. Rear access is from alleys.

The architecture of Automobile Alley Historic District includes several examples of horizontal window fenestration, corbeled brick work, patterned flush brick work, large rectangular windows, building names engraved in masonry, and other ornamental features. Other elements widely used on Automobile Alley buildings include red or buff brick; garage doors (typically wood); old advertising signs painted on buildings; embellishments along tops of exterior walls, including parapets and cornices; old metal advertising signs extending from the fronts of buildings; elevator penthouses (some with ghost signs); and large storefronts for display.¹

Automobile Alley Historic District consists of seven blocks of North Broadway Avenue, plus two blocks of Northwest 10th. The location of Automobile Alley Historic District is now identified as part of downtown Oklahoma City, or the central area of the city that primarily consists of non-residential buildings. The core of downtown, where some buildings are over ten stories tall, abuts the south end of Automobile Alley. During the period of historic significance, Broadway Avenue was part of a major north-south highway. Today, it provides a local link between the downtown core and exits from Interstate 235, about four blocks east, and also connects to nearby residential neighborhoods.

The streetscape of the Automobile Alley Historic District is mostly gently sloped, with a 25-foot rise from the south end to the north end. The platting, from the original townsite, provided that Broadway Avenue have a 100-foot right-of-way; all other north-south streets are narrower. The east-west side streets have 80-foot rights-of-way. (The east-west commercial streets in the original plat, south of the district - Main, Sheridan, California, and Reno - are 100 feet wide.)² Most lots are 140 feet deep, with 20-foot alleys in the rear. Most platted lots are 25 feet wide; most properties are in multiples of that dimension.

Four of the 53 buildings (7.5%) are already listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places. An additional 30 not previously listed are contributing (56.6%); the total contributing including the already listed is 34, or 64.2%. Noncontributing buildings number 19 (35.8%), with six being newer than the period of significance.

¹City of Oklahoma City, Planning Department. Automobile Alley Design Guidelines, 1997.

²It has been reported, but not confirmed, that 100 feet was needed to turn around a wagon with a team of horses. Another explanation is that wagons needed to park parallel, two or three deep, in front of commercial establishments, and still allow moving vehicles to pass.

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Continuation Sheet

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Automobile Alley Historic District
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Properties Listed in the National Register

1 **500 North Broadway Avenue. Oklahoma Publishing Company Building.** 1909. NR 1978. This building is significant for both its architecture and its contribution to the communications field in Oklahoma City. Architecturally, the building is an excellent example of the Classical Revival style (with Beaux Arts influences) designed by one of Oklahoma's most prominent architects, Solomon A. Layton. The building is five stories tall (plus basement), clad in marble, with square fluted pilasters topped with capitals at the top of the fourth floor, a prominent horizontal band below the top floor, balustrade, terra cotta frieze, and arches above doorways. Most windows are grouped in threes. As for communications, the building was home to a publishing empire which has included *The Daily Oklahoman*, *The Oklahoma City Times*, and *The Farmer Stockman*. (Photos # 1, 2)

2 **722 North Broadway Avenue. Magnolia Petroleum Building.** C. 1919. NR 1979. This brick building is five stories tall, in a Sullivanesque style (Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements). It is one of the earliest surviving buildings designed by the architects Hawk and Parr. The Magnolia Petroleum Company was the major regional oil pipeline company from 1911 to 1925, when it was bought by the predecessor of Mobil. The wide spans on the first floor were openings for a drive-through filling station until 1960. Cast in concrete above the first floor are "Magnolia Petroleum Company," "Bdwy," "1919," and magnolia blossoms. (Photos # 12, 13)

3 & 4 **1104 North Robinson Avenue. First Christian Church.** C. 1910, 1920. NR 1984. This Classical Revival style church has a raised dome, cupolas on three corners, and Corinthian columns at the top of a full story of steps to the main sanctuary entrance. It was designed by Van Slyke & Woodruff, Architects. The exterior wall is limestone, with rectangular openings on three levels. Many windows are of stained glass, including those in the dome. The five-story Education Building (northeast wing) was added in 1920. (Photos # 33, 35, 37, 38, 41) A detached building in front of the northeast wing is **127 Northwest 10th**, the First Christian Church Youth Center, C. 1941. This two-story stone Classical Revival building has a flat roof and a symmetrical facade. The elegant building has a veneer of smooth monumental stone yet has a less grand design than that of the church to the west. The building is compatible with the church due to the use of a matching light colored stone, and classic, but subdued forms of ornamentation. (Photos # 35, 36)

Contributing Properties

1 **106 Northwest 6th.** Southwest Wheel & Rim Company / Higgins Neon Sign Company. C. 1927. This one-story Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival building has a facade of painted brick with some ornamental concrete elements; the sides are painted brick. There are three sets of windows, with the main entry at the west end and a secondary door at the east; the center was a garage door, now with brick infilling the lower one-third and windows for the remainder. The transom is filled in with plywood and painted. Windows are boarded and painted on the west (alley) and east sides. A drive-up window is on the west side. (Photos # 7, 8)

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Automobile Alley Historic District
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Section 7, Page 13

2 **25 Northwest 9th.** Reinauer Brothers Motor Company. C. 1928. This one- and two-story, brick Commercial Style building has a gabled roof behind a stepped-back parapet, garage doors on three sides, the remains of a neon sign, and upper floor pivoting steel casement windows. The first floor display windows are covered with nonoriginal expanded metal; one window is partly filled in with boards and small windows. As the Studebaker dealer for many years, Reinauer used the adjacent vacant parcel on the northeast corner of Broadway and 9th as a car sales lot. (Photo # 24)

3 **110 Northwest 10th.** Marion Hotel. C. 1904. This three-story (plus basement), brick Classical Revival building has a symmetrical facade with full height bay windows and a centered projecting entry section. A mansard pediment intersects a gabled pediment above the entry. Windows on sides have flattened arches with triple rowlocks; sills are concrete. Cast stone is used for a sign above the door, and for keystones above centered windows. The first floor brick has depressed bands, giving the effect of quoins. A ghost sign remains on the east side. (Photos # 28, 27, 26)

4 **201-213 Northwest 10th & 1101-1113 North Robinson Avenue.** Eisele Motors / Claude Neon Federal Company. C. 1928. This two-story, brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof, dark red brick, and cast stone surrounds for each storefront and upstairs window. The arched cast stone molding creates a rhythm that unifies this corner building and enables it to have two street facades. The two-story portion occupies only the northern third of the lots and the eastern third of the lots. The Claude Neon Federal Company was the tenant of the westernmost storefront. The lower floor openings have been filled in with siding or boards. (Photos # 39, 40, 41)

5 **215 Northwest 10th.** Hadden Hall. C. 1911. This three-story, brick Classical Revival building has a flat roof, decorative pilasters, and a decorative cornice. The formal, symmetric facade is flanked by plain brick side walls. Each side wall includes numerous windows in a pattern typical of hotels and rooming houses. A large metal awning was extended toward the street to shelter the sidewalk and steps leading up to the grand entrance. Most front and side windows have been replaced with fixed units. (Photo # 41)

6 **504 North Broadway Avenue.** Buick Motor Company. C. 1911. This two-story, stone Classical Revival building has a flat roof and rich decorative stone detail. The first floor storefront area has been altered, with board infill, a large garage door, and large fixed windows. The symmetry and rhythm of the second floor facade are strong, with five ranks of original paired, hung windows. Exposed concrete framework contains the brick on the side. Centered on the parapet is a shield with the name "Buick" cast in script lettering. An elevator penthouse is at the rear. (Photos # 1, 2)

7 **512 North Broadway Avenue.** Markham Motor Company. C. 1920. This two-story, stone Classical Revival building has a flat roof, extensive use of smooth stone, and tall wide windows. Square and rectangular stone, the window panes, and the symmetry enable the building to project a very elegant but simple appearance. The first floor has new storefront windows, which lack the original muntins; the second floor has nonoriginal windows. The building name is carved in block letters across the parapet. An elevator penthouse is at the rear. (Photo # 2)

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Automobile Alley Historic District
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

8 **601-605 North Broadway Avenue.** C. 1920. This three-story, concrete Classical Revival building has dominant pilaster-like mullions topped by a boldly projecting cornice within a full entablature. The front has five ranks; the left side, facing the side street, has seven. A metal canopy is over the main entrance; under it the first floor wall has been covered in nonoriginal square-cut ashlar stone, which hides the original ornamentation. Upper floor windows, now boarded over, have nonoriginal aluminum frames. The lot slopes uphill to the rear, so that the back side is only two-story. An elevator penthouse is near the rear corner. (Photos # 3, 4)

9 **622 North Broadway Avenue.** Allied Paint & Wallpaper. C. 1948, 1905. This building is of mixed International Style and Commercial Style, and has a flat roof and stuccoed facade. The International Style accents, including smooth-faced stucco grooved to simulate stone facing, slanted storefront windows, and absence of detail, were added within the period of significance about 1948. Although the front of the building is two stories tall, the rear half is one story in height and was added after 1922. (Photo # 9)

10 **718 North Broadway Avenue.** Smith Standard Parts Company / People's Spiritualist Church. C. 1911. This two-story, brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof. It has columns with star-shaped concrete details, and a double concrete band at the top of the first level. The first floor storefront windows and upper floor windows are new. (Photos # 13, 12)

11 **800 North Broadway Avenue.** Walker Motor Sales. C. 1915. This one-story, stucco Commercial Style building is divided into three bays and has a flat roof with a parapet. The facade is symmetrical and contains a nonoriginal overhead door flanked by windows filled in with wood, and transoms (now open). The stucco, though not original, is believed to have been applied over the brick prior to 1932. The terrain slopes down toward the rear, where there is a basement. (Photo # 14)

12 **804 North Broadway Avenue.** C. 1916. This one-story, stucco Commercial Style building has a flat roof with a stepped parapet. The facade is symmetrical and contains a centered doorway flanked by two bays, one of which has new windows, the other of which has an overhead door and fixed windows. All transoms are boarded over. The stucco, though not original, is believed to have been applied over the brick within the period of significance. (Photo # 14)

13 **811-813 North Broadway Avenue.** Dance, W.C., Inc. C. 1920. This two-story, Commercial Style brick building has a flat roof and parapet wall. The lower story is all nonoriginal plate glass windows except for an art deco style door surround placed off-center. The row of second story windows (boarded over) are separated by similarly styled mullions. Brick pilasters project slightly from the corners, topped by matching mullions. The brick parapet is topped with a concrete cap. The rear elevator penthouse has a ghost sign with "Chevrolet" and that automobile's logo. (Photos # 16, 17)

14 **820 North Broadway Avenue.** C. 1917. This two-story, box-shaped, brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof, parapet wall, and corner pilasters. A concrete band is used as the sill for the second story windows and on the stepped parapet cap. Plate glass windows (nonoriginal) run the length of the facade on

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Automobile Alley Historic District
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

both stories; the door is slightly off-center on the first story. Four concrete diamonds are used in the parapet brickwork. A nonoriginal mural covers the right side. (Photo # 15)

15 **824 North Broadway Avenue.** Shelburne Motor Company / Severin Tire & Supply Company. C. 1920. This three-story, brick Commercial Style building located on a corner has horizontal concrete banding between floors and on the parapet, large windows on the first and third floors, concrete capitals on the pilasters at the second floor level, and cast stone arches over the parapet caps on the corners. There are nonoriginal fixed windows on the first two floors, with original steel casements on the third; some original windows on the lower floors remain on the side, toward the rear. The side has a garage door (elevator penthouse is three stories up) and a secondary pedestrian door. A flat metal canopy extends the full width of the facade. (Photo # 15)

16 **825 North Broadway Avenue.** McClelland-Gentry Motor Company / TG&Y Store. C. 1918. This three-story, brick Commercial Style building has a set of three distinct bays across its facade. The lowest story's white stucco provides a sharp contrast to the dark brick of the upper stories. Wide beams and columns define the window units; the panes are new, fixed units. A decorative concrete band wraps the street sides of the parapet. Various brick patterns have been used throughout to highlight architectural features. Three openings on the first floor have been infilled with contrasting brick. One of the two elevator penthouses atop the rear of the building has a ghost sign with "Hudson Essex Motor Cars" in block letters. (Photos # 18, 17)

17 **900 North Broadway Avenue.** St. Nicholas Hotel. C. 1910. This three-story, painted brick Commercial Style hotel building has a flat roof, concrete bands, name etched above doorway centered on the side, round detail windows, and large stone blocks aside doorways. Stepped brick dentils are below the parapet. The windows and roof are being replaced after a recent fire. (Photos # 19, 20)

18 **901-903 North Broadway Avenue.** C. 1915. This one-story, painted brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof with a concrete-capped parapet. The rear section, with a garage door, omits the high parapet facing the side street; the parapet step-down has a cast concrete piece with a scroll. The building has a wide front bay, and two smaller bays facing the side street. Most of the bays have nonoriginal fixed windows and boarded-over transoms. The facade matches the abutting 905-907; while on the front they appear to be one building, they are structurally separate. (Photo # 21)

19 **905-907 North Broadway Avenue.** C. 1915. This one-story, painted brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof with a concrete-capped parapet. The building has a wide front bay; part of it has an overhead garage door; the remainder has wood-frame fixed windows. The facade matches the abutting 901-903. (Photos # 21, 22)

20 **909 North Broadway Avenue.** C. 1916. This one-story, painted brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof and parapet wall. The entrance is offset to the left; windows fill the area to the right. The transom is filled with glass blocks. Concrete and brick detailing (painted white) are above the transom and below the

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Automobile Alley Historic District
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parapet cap. The brick below the top of the transom has a seamless bond with that of the 911 first floor front, although it is painted a different color. (Photos # 21, 22)

21 913-919 North Broadway Avenue. Mee-Oakes Supply Company / Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company / Southern Sales Company. C. 1924. This three-story, brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof; the concrete-capped parapet has two rectangular upward projections. Elevator penthouses are at both rear corners. Windows above the first story are symmetrical, in ribbons of four with four sets across the facade on each floor; the nonoriginal multi-lite units are fixed or hung. A nonoriginal balloon fabric awning is above the non-original first story storefront windows, and an offset angled entrance has a building sign and planter. (Photos # 21, 22, 23)

22 914 North Broadway Avenue. Greenlease-Moore Cadillac Company. C. 1924. This three-story, brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof behind a shaped parapet, decorative brickwork and concrete on facade. Pilasters separate the three front bays. The building is almost identical to the abutting 920 North Broadway Avenue. There are steel casement windows, many of which are boarded over; the only front entry remaining is a partial overhead door. A nonoriginal ghost sign remains on the upper right side. (Photos # 20, 19)

23 920 North Broadway Avenue. Greenlease-Moore Cadillac Company. C. 1920. This three-story, symmetrical brick Commercial Style building was designed by prominent local architect Solomon Layton. It has a flat roof behind a shaped parapet, decorative brickwork and concrete on facade. The facade is divided by pilasters into three sections; the center is just the width of a doorway. An elevator penthouse is at the rear. The building is almost identical to the abutting 914 North Broadway Avenue. The windows on all floors are boarded over. A nonoriginal mural is painted on the left side. (Photos # 20, 19)

24 1007 North Broadway Avenue. C. 1918. This one-story, symmetrical, brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof, with the parapet including considerable detailing with differing brick patterns and concrete squares and bands. The symmetrical facade has a centered door, flanked by storefront windows; all openings have nonoriginal units; transoms above the windows are filled in. (Photos # 26, 25)

25 1011-1015 North Broadway Avenue. Oklahoma National Guard Armory / Broadway Garage. C. 1914. This three-story, brick Commercial Style building has a pyramidal roof behind a brick parapet. Mullion-like pilasters extend from top of first story and project through the parapet where they are capped with decorative concrete. Second and third story windows (boarded over) are in ribbons of three, five units across. The first story facade has been replaced with new brick and windows. A ghost sign is on the upper left side. (Photos # 26, 25)

26 1100 North Broadway Avenue. Chieftain Pontiac Company. C. 1929. This two-story, brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof. It has brick columns with decorative concrete caps, separating four bays on the front and eight on the side. There is a crenelated brick parapet with concrete cap, and decorative concrete circular patterns on top of the first floor. A ghost sign is on the left side parapet. All first floor

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Automobile Alley Historic District
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windows have been replaced with fixed units and board infill; some upper floor windows are original steel casement. The entry has a nonoriginal inset with rough lumber used for window surrounds. Two garage doors are on the side. (Photos # 29, 30)

27 **1101 North Broadway Avenue.** Buick Motor Company. C. 1926. This four-story, brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof with a parapet. The south side, facing Northwest 10th, has six bays; the east side has three bays, plus a one-story section of matching style attached to the north side. The bays are separated by flush brick pilasters, crowned with concrete details. Concrete sills are on all upper floor windows; concrete squares accent the lintel corners; a concrete band is above the top windows. Basket-weave brick is on the parapet. The top two floors have steel casement windows; the second floor windows are double hung. The first floor windows are replaced with fixed units or doors (including garage doors); transoms have been filled in. One east-side bay has a flat metal canopy above. An elevator penthouse is at the northwest corner. (Photos # 32, 33, 34)

28 **1106 North Broadway Avenue.** Hoge, A.G., Hardware Company. C. 1926. This one-story, brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof; the symmetrical concrete-capped brick parapet is angled down from the center and notched at the edges. The paired upper-level windows (which look as if they are for a second floor but are not) are double hung. The entire facade has a flat metal canopy. The lower-level store windows are symmetrical, with an inset centered entry with two doors. (Photos # 30, 29)

29 **1110-1112 North Broadway Avenue.** Capital City Auto Supply Company. C. 1947 & 1926. This two-story, brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof with a multi-level parapet. The first story facade is divided into two bays. The left bay has a recessed entrance with flanking display windows which are partly filled in with boards. The right bay has an overhead vehicle door flanked by single door entrances. Both bays have a cloth awning covering the transom area. Four pairs of nonoriginal metal double-hung windows are evenly spaced across the second story facade. The parapet has several levels with the highest being the mid-section and the lowest areas between the mid-section and the corners. The building name plate "19 HANSON 47" is centered in the parapet. The north half of the building dates from 1926; the south half and facade were built within the period of significance in 1947. Various cast concrete blocks and changes in the brick pattern provide additional detail to the facade. (Photos # 30, 31)

30 **1117 North Robinson Avenue.** C. 1937. This two-story, painted brick Art Deco building has three main bays separated by massive brick pilasters. The first floor windows have a chevron pattern on the lintels and clipped corners; the panes are replaced with fixed units; half of one bay is a garage door. The upper floor bays are subdivided by small pilasters; the windows are steel casements. The parapet, in front of a flat roof, has projecting crowns atop each pilaster; the center bay is higher than the sides. The brick has a light color except for the parapet, where dark paint is between the main pilasters. (Photo # 39)

Noncontributing Properties

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1 **119 Northwest 10th.** Hahn Funeral Home (Garages). C. 1921. This one-story, brick building of no distinctive style has some arched parapets suggesting a Spanish influence. The corbeled brick below the flat roof and the window on the older, eastern portion enable a better interpretation of the how the building looked. The alley (north) side has only minor structural alterations. The south side has an intrusive concrete-block addition constructed since the period of significance. Garage doors are replaced with metal units with small oval windows. The building is noncontributing because of alterations. (Photos # 34, 33, 35)

2 **609 North Broadway Avenue.** C. 1951. This two-story, brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof and parapet wall. The center of the first floor is recessed and includes one of three front entrances. Entrances are also located at opposite ends of the front. The front is dominated by large plate glass windows. The second story facade is solid brick without detailing; it is topped with a concrete cap on the parapet. This building is noncontributing because of age. (Photos # 4, 3)

3 **611-613 North Broadway Avenue.** Neumann's Cafe. C. 1915. This one-story, painted brick Commercial Style building has a flat, asphalt roof behind its simple parapet. The building shares common walls on both sides and is set flush with the adjacent buildings. The two entrances, each serving a different business, are located on opposite ends of the facade; three windows have been placed between the doors. Four diamond shaped, chipped brick extrusions are positioned above the doors and windows. The building is non-contributing because of the painted brick and prominent alteration of the windows. (Photos # 5, 4)

4 **615-617 North Broadway Avenue.** Schwartz, Mark S., Lawyer. C. 1983. This two-story, brick Contemporary Commercial building has a flat roof and an asymmetrical facade. The windows and both entrances are all recessed. Brick pilasters extend the height of the building at the corners and between the entrances. Mullions are diagonally placed. This building is noncontributing because of age. (Photos # 5, 6, 7)

5 **701 North Broadway Avenue.** Anthony, C.R., Company. C. 1951 major remodeling and addition to 1917 and 1933 building. The 1951 design for this five-story, stone Modern Movement building was done by Sorey, Hill, and Sorey, a prominent local architectural firm in the mid-century. The building has a flat roof and a symmetrical facade. The entrance is centered with windows to both sides and a canopy overhead; the windows and canopy wrap around the left side, facing the side street. Horizontal members have been placed over the first floor windows to create a linear Modern Movement effect. Two overhead doors are near the rear of the left side. The second and third floors have no windows on the front; large fixed units are on the left side to the rear. The fourth floor has regularly spaced, almost square windows on the front and left sides. A cornice-like canopy extends over a solid row of windows on the fifth floor. This building is noncontributing because its major facade elements were constructed after the period of significance. (Photo # 10)

6 **706 North Broadway Avenue.** Kelly Motor Company / Congress Hotel. C. 1915. This one-story, box-shaped, painted brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof and parapet wall. The facade is divided into two bays; each bay has a transom window and canvas awning over nonoriginal plate glass windows and

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a centered doorway; the transoms have been boarded over. Originally three stories tall, the upper floors were removed in 1985 after a fire; this major change makes the resource noncontributing. (Photo # 12)

7 **710 North Broadway Avenue.** Broadway Machine Shop. C. 1916. This one-story, Commercial Style building has a flat roof and parapet wall. The entrance is located to the right front and windows fill the remaining lower facade. Metal sheathing covers the upper half of the facade; this alteration covers all historic exterior elements and makes the building noncontributing. (Photos # 12, 13)

8 **712 North Broadway Avenue.** Severin Tire & Supply Company. C. 1920. This two-story, brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof. The symmetrical facade includes three bays separated by pilasters, each pilaster with diamond-shaped concrete inserts. An elevator penthouse is in the rear. Alterations include replacement of the first floor windows with stuccoed full storefront units, and stuccoed-over second floor windows; these changes make the building noncontributing. (Photos # 12, 13)

9 **725-727 North Broadway Avenue.** Smith, James C., Motor Company / American Electric Ignition Company. C. 1915. This one-story, painted brick Commercial Style building, located on a corner, has brick walls and a flat roof. Large plate glass windows fill the center and right of the facade, wrapping to the right side facing the side street. For the left one-third of the facade, brick infills the transom and is aside the doorway, which has a flat canopy. Four metal garage doors are on the right side. Such extensive changes make the building noncontributing. (Photo # 11)

10 **801 North Broadway Avenue.** McDonald-Scott Chevrolet Company. C. 1937. This one-story, brick Commercial Style building is divided into three bays by pilasters. In-between are large plate glass windows (nonoriginal). The eastmost side bay has brick infill. The top of the original parapet has two black glazed bands. The barrel roof is partly hidden by the false wall created by corrugated metal attached to the top the masonry wall. This building is noncontributing because of alterations including the window changes and parapet addition. (Photos # 16, 17)

11 **807 North Broadway Avenue.** C. 1920. This one-story, painted brick building of Commercial Style has a symmetrical facade flush with common walls on both sides. The centered doorway (with original glazed wood doors) has a concrete segmental surround with an elliptical arch and quoins. Large storefront windows (boarded over) are placed to either side of the entrance and have original leaded glass transoms with accentuated lintels above. Brick accents remain visible just below the metal siding added to the parapet; an added metal awning remains over the right front window. Alterations which make the building noncontributing include the metal siding and awning. (Photos # 16, 17)

12 **815 North Broadway Avenue.** C. 1917. This two-story, painted brick Commercial Style building has a flat roof and parapet wall. The symmetrical facade is flush with common walls. Art deco detailing has been used at the building edges on the first story. The nonoriginal fixed upper story windows are separated with brick mullions. A cloth awning extends above the first floor windows over most of the facade. This building

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is noncontributing because of the prominent raised concrete panels filling in the lowest part of the first floor, the nonoriginal second floor windows, and nonoriginal awning. (Photos # 17, 18)

13 911 North Broadway Avenue. Nine-Eleven Cafe. C. 1924, 1946. This two-story, painted brick and stucco Commercial Style building has a flat roof with a parapet wall. The first floor includes a large, plate glass window (nonoriginal), and a single width overhead garage door. Four casement windows with shutters on the stuccoed second floor, the front of which was added C. 1946. The first floor brick has a seamless bond with that of the 909 front, although it is painted a different color. This property is noncontributing because of the first-floor alterations. (Photos # 22, 21, 23)

14 912 North Broadway Avenue. C. 1937. This small one-story, stucco and brick building of no distinctive style has a flat roof. This building is noncontributing because of the new brick on the side (matching the wall of the adjacent parking lot) and because all the windows have been replaced. (Photos # 19, 20, 22)

15 929 North Broadway Avenue. Oakland Motor Car Company. C. 1917. This two-story, stucco Commercial Style building located on a corner has a flat roof. The facade is symmetrical, with ornate iron planter boxes below each second floor window. The first floor stucco is scored to look like large blocks. The storefront awnings have all been removed; all windows have been boarded up with vertical siding; the original entrance has been replaced with aluminum and glass doors. "Mercer Building 1922" is painted on the side and front parapet areas. The stucco surface is of unknown date; since the stucco is uniformly applied on the slightly different front and rear sections, it is believed to be nonoriginal, therefore making this building noncontributing. (Photo # 23)

16 1001 North Broadway Avenue. C. 1981. This one-story, concrete building with a flat roof has no distinctive style. The inset entrance is located just right of center. Hung windows with brick sills have been spaced somewhat evenly across the facade and left side. The building is set back with a parking lot in front; the right side shares a common wall. This building is noncontributing because of age. (Photo # 25)

17 1017-1025 North Broadway Avenue & 106 Northwest 10th. C. 1952. This one-story, brick Contemporary Commercial building has a flat roof and parapet wall capped with concrete. The building has glazed slab entrances for its various businesses; the corner doorway is canted and two other doors face Broadway Avenue. On the Broadway side, plate glass windows fill the facade below the flat metal awning. On the Northwest 10th side, there are three-pane horizontal windows and an entry door. This building is noncontributing because of age. (Photo # 26, 27)

18 1114 North Broadway Avenue. C. 1920. This one-story, brick building of no distinctive style has a flat roof with a parapet. Its features have been covered with perma stone (composite) veneer. The two front bays have been filled in: the left space is half covered with stone and a large garage door is on the other half; the right half is filled in with stucco and a single slab pedestrian door. These changes make the building noncontributing. (Photo # 31)

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19 **1122 North Broadway Avenue.** C. 1956. This one-story, painted brick, flat roofed building has no distinctive style. Built as an automobile service station, two garage bays (with glazed paneled doors) are on the left. The sales and display area is on the right, with fixed storefront windows and a glazed metal door; left of the door is infilled with brick. The metal fascia, which runs across the facade, turns down at the right side wall and extends to the ground. The building is set back from the corner, with two sets of gasoline pumps between the building and the streets. The building is noncontributing because of age. (Photo # 31)

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Summary

The Automobile Alley Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, for its association with commerce as Oklahoma City's automobile retailing center in the first half of the twentieth century. The district is also significant under Criterion C for its architecturally significant collection of one- and two-story commercial buildings related to the automobile industry.

North Broadway Avenue, the main corridor of the Automobile Alley Historic District, was platted as a 100-foot wide street with Oklahoma City's founding in 1889. It became a streetcar route, and later a highway. Developed originally with houses, the street saw commercial redevelopment occurring mainly in the 1910s and 1920s, with new car dealers and related suppliers. After World War II the central business district expanded into the area and car dealers began to leave the district. Following this, the downtown and Automobile Alley began a slow decline.

Over half the buildings in the district are of the Commercial Style, usually of one- or two-story brick storefronts flush with the sidewalk; a few buildings are taller. The second-most predominant style is Classical Revival.

The exact origin of the name "Automobile Alley" is unknown. A long-time resident³ had heard the term "Automobile Row" by the 1930s, due to the large number of automobile dealers in the area. Dealers advertising in the newspapers and in the city directories, however, made no reference to their district. The earliest written reference located for "Automobile Alley" is from 1980.⁴ That name became the preferred self-identification of the community group organizing for the Main Street Program in late 1995.

The period of significance extends from 1911 to 1948. The oldest extant automobile-related building in the district, at 504 North Broadway Avenue, was built in 1911. The period of significance ends in 1948 at the National Register's fifty year mark.

The Automobile Alley Historic District retains a high degree of integrity of feeling and association, as well as design, materials, workmanship, and location.

Historical Background

Oklahoma City's founding did not occur slowly, rather it happened overnight. Congress opened the "Unassigned Lands" of Oklahoma Territory for settlement to non-Native Americans on 22 April 1889, after much lobbying and several illegal attempts to enter the territory were thwarted by the United States Army. Prior to the opening, approximately seven buildings marked the site of the future city, then called Oklahoma Station. These buildings, comprising a Santa Fe rail stop, were aligned along the railroad tracks located north of a bend of the North Canadian River. The Unassigned Lands opened for settlement at noon, 22 April 1889, and by evening time, Oklahoma Station had become a flourishing city with a population of several thousand

³Mary Kay Leslie, personal interview, October 17, 1997.

⁴Bob L. Blackburn et al. The Physical Legacy: Buildings of Oklahoma County 1889 to 1931. Southwestern Heritage Press, 1980, p. 45, 51.

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and many temporary wood and canvas buildings. By June 1889, a scant two months after the opening, city population stood at 4,138 people, with the majority being male.

The majority of nineteenth and twentieth century towns and cities matured in a fixed pattern. City evolution naturally radiated outward from the center. The central portion of the town, the first area developed, contained the business district with an adjacent residential neighborhood. As the city grew, the original residential zone began to deteriorate as a result of the continued expansion of the business section. In deference to the decline of the first residential zone, the working class located their dwellings outside the initial residential area but within short distances of their place of employment. Seeking newer and improved housing, the middle to upper classes further extended the town by creating a strictly residential area towards the outer limits of the working class section. As the city proceeded to prosper, the upper classes moved to suburban areas lying just outside the incorporated boundaries. These suburban zones included limited commercial development, usually along periphery streets or in contained commercial pockets. Increases in population and employment opportunities soon resulted in the annexation of the suburban zone into the city proper, and so a metropolis was created.

Oklahoma City, although maturing fairly rapidly, was no exception to this pattern. In 1891, the Townsite Trustees filed a plat showing blocks from 4th to 7th; however, a "birds eye" drawing of the town dated February 1890 showed streets and houses already between 4th and 7th. North of 7th, parcels were platted from 1898 to 1903 as far as 13th. Broadway was continued with 100-foot right-of-way to one block north of 10th, at Broadway Circle, where its location shifted a half-block west along (now) Broadway Place. The extensions north of town were primarily developed in housing.

A streetcar system, begun in 1903, encouraged continued expansion of the city's residential areas; a double-track line ran along Broadway. After statehood in 1907, the capital was moved to Oklahoma City in 1910. That same year, a packing plant in the Stockyards provided 2400 jobs for the young city. This kind of growth caused rapid transitions in land use from open prairie to residential to commercial use.

The additions to north Oklahoma City are summarized below, with their parts of Automobile Alley Historic District described:⁵

Oklahoma City original (extension)	1891	4th to 7th
Gault & Johnson	1898	West side Broadway, 7th to 8th
McClure's	1898	West of Robinson, north of alley north of 10th
Florence	1899	North side 10th, Broadway to west of Robinson
Dale Amended	1900	South of Park Place, east of Broadway
Gault's	1900	West side Broadway, 8th to 10th
Gault's Second	1901	East side Broadway, 7th to north of 10th

What is now the Automobile Alley district included 36 single-family houses in 1919; a larger number were within one block outside the district.⁶ Now there are no houses in the district, and less than a half-dozen

⁵Oklahoma County Deed Records (plats).

⁶Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps.

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within a block. Some homes, such as that of Charles F. Colcord (one of the city's founders) at 504 Broadway, had already been removed by 1919; however, most surrounding blocks had houses every fifty feet. To accompany this housing, one block away on Robinson was "Church Row." By 1919, there were churches for the Methodist, Methodist South (not extant), Lutheran, Episcopal (St. Paul's Cathedral, NR 1977), Baptist, Christian (First Christian Church, NR 1984), Presbyterian (not extant), and Christian Science denominations; the Roman Catholic church was one block west (St. Joseph's Cathedral, NR 1978). A Jewish temple (not extant) was on Broadway Circle; it also housed another Lutheran congregation. A Unitarian congregation occupied a building at 9th and Broadway (not extant). Emerson School was constructed at 6th and Walker in 1894 (not extant, but 1910 addition remains); Central High School (NR 1976) was built in 1910 on Robinson between 7th and 8th.⁷ The Carnegie Library (replaced) was built in 1903 at Robinson and Dean A. McGee Avenues.

In the 1920s, Oklahoma City was enjoying much of the national prosperity. Automobiles were available to middle-class people. Downtown was booming with construction of such tall buildings as the First National Bank, Braniff Building (NR 1980), OG&E Building (NR 1980) and Cotton-Exchange Building (NR 1980). Residential areas were being developed well beyond downtown, which was still the core commercial area. Oklahoma City's first zoning ordinance in 1923 provided for almost all the Automobile Alley Historic District to be included in the Business and Light Manufacturing zone. Homes along Broadway gave way to redevelopment with automobile-related businesses.

Highways interconnecting cities were designated with federal numbers beginning in the 1920s. U.S. Route 66, from Chicago to Los Angeles, ran east-west through the north side of Oklahoma City; it was designated in 1926.⁸ Route 77, from Nebraska to Texas, ran along Broadway north from downtown Oklahoma City. About 1928, Broadway was cut straight through north from Broadway Circle to 13th, requiring the demolition of three blocks of houses on the west side of Broadway Drive; today's park along the east side of Broadway was the remainder of the property where the houses sat.

The Great Depression, which began with the Stock Market crash of October 1929, had less effect upon Oklahoma City than upon much of the nation. Oil had been discovered nearby in 1928 and drilling (even on the Capitol grounds) was proceeding rapidly. Businesses along Broadway continued to prosper, as housing construction continued with such developments as Crown Heights (NR 1995) and Shepherd (NR 1997).

In 1940, plans for an air depot were underway in response to the start of World War II in Europe. After Pearl Harbor in December 1941, operations were expanded to make the air depot a major employer for the city. During the war, new car production was diverted to the war effort, and gasoline and tires were rationed.

After the war, housing development in Oklahoma City exploded, and more businesses located outside of downtown; by the mid-1960s such shopping centers as Mayfair, Windsor Hills, and Shepherd Mall had been

⁷Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps, National Register nominations.

⁸Route 66 and Associated Historic Resources in Oklahoma National Register nomination, 1994.

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developed. North of 4th, Broadway remained a major link in the north-south highway until Interstate 35 was completed three miles east in 1960.⁹

Urban Renewal projects in the early 1970s were intended to salvage downtown from its decline as shopping centers became the preferred commercial areas. Most buildings east of Broadway and south of 4th were demolished; a new boulevard extended southeast and south from Broadway and 4th, named for the *Daily Oklahoman* newspaper publisher E.K. Gaylord.

With the opening of Centennial Expressway (three blocks east on Northeast 10th) in 1989, traffic on Broadway dropped to less than half of the previous volume, thus lowering the visibility for potential retail sales within Automobile Alley. The April 19, 1995 Murrah Federal Building bombing occurred just a block away, on Northwest 5th west of Robinson Avenue; all buildings in Automobile Alley Historic District had broken glass; some had significant structural damage, but none collapsed. One action of the community after the bombing was the creation of an urban Main Street Program along Broadway, a broad-based revitalization effort utilizing historic preservation as part of economic development.

Commercial Significance

The Automobile Alley Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with commerce as Oklahoma City's automobile retailing center in the first half of the twentieth century. Establishments in the district associated with the automobile included new car dealers, used car dealers, parts suppliers, repair places, and filling stations, with additional commercial construction not dependent upon the automobile.

Within the span of only a quarter-century, the automobile went from a rarity to a commonly seen consumer item in the United States. The world's first automobile (or independently powered road vehicle) was by Daimler, in Germany, in the 1880s. The first in the United States is credited to J. Frank and Charles Duryea in 1893. By 1902 there were over 100 manufacturers, mostly small producers making vehicles by hand. Automobiles were considered a luxury, or used for business. In 1904, just under 23,000 vehicles were made. Henry Ford introduced the Model T in 1908; it was produced until 1927. The Model T, built on assembly lines, was affordable to middle-class buyers. Total automobile production in 1909, including Fords, was just over 100,000 vehicles; in 1926, it was over four million.¹⁰ (Fred Jones operated one Ford assembly line at 900 West Main in Oklahoma City; that facility is still associated with Ford Motor Company.)

The introduction of the mass produced automobile changed the American lifestyle. The automobile allowed for faster, more reliable transportation of individuals and families. No longer dependent on scheduled transportation such as railroads, Americans took to the road in automobiles in ever increasing numbers for both pleasure and work. Urban dwellers found that the automobile allowed them to depart the inner city for more spacious residential surroundings and leisurely vacations in distant locales. Rural inhabitants became reliant on the automobile to connect them to happenings off the farm, while using mechanized machinery to speed their

⁹Oklahoma Department of Transportation, *Construction History/Route 35*.

¹⁰Bellamy Partridge, *Fill 'er Up! The Story of Fifty Years of Motoring*, pp. 220-224.

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work and expand their holdings. Improved roads and faster cars increased the attachment between Americans and their automobiles, an attachment that remains intact to this day.

The first car dealers were located in the commercial core of towns, and were often the local blacksmiths or livery stable owners. Later, downtown buildings with large first floor front windows were ideal for display spaces, and the rear of the buildings were used for parts and service. Large freight elevators permitted additional service and display space on upper floors.¹¹ In early years, dealers kept only a few samples and buyers placed orders. Later, customers bought from a choice of cars on hand which required additional space to store the inventory. Credit for car purchases, beginning in 1915 for Willys and 1919 for General Motors, made cars more attainable to the average consumer.¹²

Gasoline was initially sold in containers from hardware and grocery stores, along side other petroleum products such as kerosene. As demand grew, and with safety requirements, oil companies began constructing outlets selling only gasoline. Initially little more than shacks, they became substantial buildings with brand-identified design and services in addition to gasoline sales.¹³

Automobiles of the early twentieth century were high-maintenance machines. Engine oil had to be changed frequently, joints needed regular lubrication, and electrical systems needed adjustments. Most roads, even in the city, were unpaved, and wheels caught in ruts might cause broken axles. The automotive repair shops quickly began appearing along with gas stations and dealerships.

During the Depression of the 1930s, new automobile sales fell; in some years fewer than two million units were produced, and many manufacturers went out of business. However, sales of parts and replacements in some years exceeded \$400 million.¹⁴ During World War II auto production went into the war effort, so businesses that had depended upon new car sales were limited to selling used cars and providing auto services. After the war ended in 1945, there was general prosperity and suburban growth, and new cars were in great demand.

The creation and growth of the automobile business in the United States paralleled the founding and growth of Oklahoma City. By 1916, the number of automobiles in Oklahoma City was greater than the number of horses.¹⁵ Oklahoma City automobile dealers sold Dodge, Buick, Franklin, Reo, Chevrolet, and Chandler, as well as Ford cars assembled in Oklahoma City. By 1919, one could also buy a Stutz Bearcat or Pierce-Arrow. In 1921, seventy-six dealerships sold cars in Oklahoma City; Automobile Alley claimed fifty-two of

¹¹Route 66 and Associated Historic Resources in Oklahoma. National Register of Historic Places nomination, pp. F:12-14.

¹²George S. May, The Automobile Industry, 1920-1980, p. 310.

¹³Route 66 and Associated Historic Resources in Oklahoma, National Register of Historic Places nomination, pp. F:8-9.

¹⁴Bellamy Partridge, Fill 'er Up! The Story of Fifty Years of Motoring, pp. 225-226.

¹⁵Roy P. Stewart, Born Grown, p. 198, 201.

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these. A 1923 report estimated that 95% of the state's 244,883 registered automobiles were distributed through dealerships in Oklahoma City.¹⁶

By 1929, over half the automobile dealers in the city were located within Automobile Alley Historic District.¹⁷ New car lines sold within the district included Chevrolet, Studebaker, Erskine, Hupmobile, Oakland, Pontiac, Graham-Paige, Buick, Nash, Chrysler, Cadillac, and La Salle.

Buildings housing car dealerships reflected changes in the marketing techniques: The Buick Motor Company building at 504 North Broadway Avenue, built in 1911, had room for only a small inventory with the salesmen taking factory orders for most buyers. When Buick moved to 1101 North Broadway Avenue in 1926, the much larger building allowed for a greater inventory; this and other buildings in the district had large elevators for moving cars to upper floors.¹⁸ About 1935, Reinauer Brothers expanded their operation from 25 Northwest 9th to include the adjacent vacant lot fronting on Broadway in order to display their Studebakers.

Suppliers and repair places located within the Automobile Alley district and on surrounding streets. In 1919 the Magnolia Petroleum Company included a filling station on the open first floor of its headquarters office building at 722 North Broadway Avenue (NR 1979). Other businesses located within the district by 1929 included ignition manufacture, tire sales, auto financing, garages, parts distributors, and used cars.

After World War II ended in 1945, thousands of new homes were constructed in new neighborhoods far from downtown. New automobiles were in high demand, and the dealers along Broadway sold many. In 1948, dealers in the district sold Pontiac, Kaiser-Frazer, Chevrolet, Studebaker, Nash, and Oldsmobile, but they were less than 1/4 of the dealers in the city. Most of the other dealers, however, were located in other areas near downtown.

By 1960, only three dealers remained in the district. By 1968, there were two, and many dealers were located in the fringes of the city. The last new car dealer in the district, Steve Burke Chevrolet, left Automobile Alley about 1983; it occupied several buildings in the 700 and 800 blocks of Broadway. Those properties, and several surrounding parcels, were the location of a redevelopment project in the early 1980s, but that was abandoned with the economic crisis after the sudden drop of petroleum revenues in the mid-1980s.

Now the buildings in the district house a variety of commercial uses, primarily offices and automobile detailing; other uses include photo imaging, auto parts, bar, church, used car sales, filling station, flower warehouse, and legal evidence warehouse. Several buildings are vacant. Rehabilitation valued at over ten million dollars is underway, including recovery from the Federal Building bombing and the revitalization efforts of the Main Street Program. Nonetheless, the historic character of the area is being retained through the sensitive rehabilitation of extant buildings.

Architectural Significance

¹⁶Bob L. Blackburn et al, The Physical Legacy: Buildings of Oklahoma County 1889 to 1931, p. 45.

¹⁷Oklahoma City City Directory, 1929.

¹⁸Bob L. Blackburn et al, The Physical Legacy: Buildings of Oklahoma County 1889 to 1931, p. 48.

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The Automobile Alley Historic District is significant under Criterion C as a distinct group of commercial buildings in Oklahoma City. Until the 1910s, this area was primarily residential with a number of religious properties one block away along Robinson Avenue. Although many of the religious buildings survived, the area, particularly Broadway Avenue, was redeveloped as a commercial area as residents moved away from downtown. This new commercial area developed largely in response to one new industry, the automobile. Automobile Alley developed and maintains a different character from other commercial areas in Oklahoma City. The district remains distinct from greater downtown Oklahoma City because the buildings in the district are generally only one- and two-stories designed as showrooms and storage for automobiles. Many of the buildings have upper floors and either elevators or ramps designed for automobiles. Downtown Oklahoma City, although severely impacted by urban renewal, is replete with much taller office buildings.

The Automobile Alley Historic District is also distinct from Oklahoma City's warehouse area, known as Bricktown, which is situated east of downtown and southeast of Automobile Alley. Again, the buildings in Automobile Alley are smaller in scale than the warehouses in Bricktown and the Automobile Alley buildings, used for both storage and sales, express a more stylistic appearance to appeal to consumers.

The district includes 53 buildings, of which four are already listed individually in the National Register, and 30 not previously listed are contributing; the total contributing including the already listed is 34, or 64%. Of the 53 buildings in the district, 33 (62%) are of the Commercial Style; eight (15%) are Classical Revival. No more than two buildings are of any other style.

The district is very cohesive with most of the buildings having common design characteristics, regardless of style. Fronts are flush with the sidewalk, at the property line and upper levels have no setbacks. The first floors are at sidewalk level, or elevated perhaps one step. Most have flat or balloon roofs. Facades occupy the full width of the property (25 or 50 feet, or multiples thereof); rear access is from alleys.

Commercial Style

Commercial Style buildings have generally flat-faced facades with little projecting ornament. Identified also as "Plains Commercial,"¹⁹ these buildings were constructed primarily between 1910 and 1950. They include automobile dealerships and garages, and light industrial buildings, as well as commercial buildings. The brick patterns form much of the limited ornament. These bricks form frames around the doors and windows or around the sign bands. Other details are cast stones set in to the brick. These are square, horizontal, or diamond shaped, and they define sign bands, window corners, and cornices. The storefronts of many of these buildings have different materials. For the bulkheads, the area below the display windows, the materials may be cast stone or glazed tile. The display windows had copper frames with wooden transoms. The storefront configurations became much more interesting with deeply recessed doors, stepped display windows, and freely standing display cases. Upper floor windows, often paired, were of wooden double-hung sashes.

In the Automobile Alley Historic District, most of the buildings listed as Commercial Style are of one or two stories, of brick or other masonry, with some detailing; a parapet wall hides the roof. Some buildings

¹⁹Ronald Frantz, AIA. Oklahoma Design Guidelines. Oklahoma Main Street Program, Oklahoma Department of Commerce, 1992. P. 20.

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Automobile Alley Historic District
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have a large vehicular penthouse visible above the upper floor. In most instances these penthouses are located near the center of the building. Most simply house machinery for the operation of these large elevators. Along Automobile Alley, these penthouses served as a beacon for many of the automobile dealerships with painted signs and defunct automobile manufacturer's logos. An additional characteristic of Automobile Alley is large openings for vehicular access along the primary facades. These openings were occasionally drive-throughs when located on a corner lot. Most were simply access into the showrooms or garages. Some buildings have a loss of integrity, with transoms covered and display windows and doors in aluminum frames; the buildings are considered contributing to the district where significant details (such as brickwork patterns) remain visible.

Typical examples are at 718 North Broadway Avenue (two stories) and 1007 North Broadway Avenue (one story), with some brick embellishments. High-style examples include 824 North Broadway Avenue and 1101 North Broadway Avenue, both multi-story buildings with extensive brick and concrete detailing. Industrial motifs in detailing include the arches above the parapet on 824, the scroll on the side of 901-903, and the upper corners on 811-813 North Broadway Avenue. This detailing demonstrates a change from typical cast concrete forms such as squares, diamonds, and shields to more mechanical forms such as gears, cogs, and pistons. Additional industrial motifs in the brick detailing are located on 821 North Broadway Avenue. These motifs are located in the decorative panels above the second story windows. This detailing has rounded features somewhat similar to the action of the fan belt of a motor.

Classical Revival

The Classical Revival commercial buildings in the Automobile Alley Historic District feature Roman- or Greek-style columns or pilasters (some square rather than round), with pediments, capitals, entablatures, and cornices. Some have Beaux Arts Revival or Romanesque Revival elements. The presentation is quite formal, with either symmetrical or equally-proportioned facades, especially in the upper levels. Precast concrete or stone in some cases are used for primary surface materials, rather than brick.

Examples include the First Christian Church (1104 North Robinson Avenue), with its full story of steps (unique for the district), which also has Beaux Arts influence in its styling. The two-story automobile sales buildings at 504 and 512 North Broadway Avenue use cast concrete in formal details. The Oklahoma Publishing Building (500 North Broadway Avenue) has high-style capitals and upper floors. The Marion Hotel (110 Northwest 10th), with its bay windows, is of the style complementary to the houses that were its neighbors when built in 1904.

Other Styles

Art Deco detailing is visible on 1117 North Robinson Avenue. International Style features are included on 622 North Broadway Avenue. Contemporary Commercial buildings were built in the last half of the twentieth century using forms and sometimes materials not commonly used earlier; this style is used for the small infill office at 615-617 North Broadway Avenue. Buildings listed as of "no distinctive style" include mixtures of styles (often from unesthetic remodeling) or are of such plain and ordinary appearance to lack distinctive features.

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Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

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Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

UTM References:

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>		<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
E	14	634870	3926760	L	14	634580	3926940
F	14	634870	3926180	M	14	634610	3926940
G	14	634820	3926180	N	14	634610	3926990
H	14	634820	3926290	O	14	634650	3926990
I	14	634770	3926290	P	14	634650	3926940
J	14	634770	3926880	Q	14	634830	3926940
K	14	634580	3926880	R	14	634830	3927000

Verbal Boundary Description

The Automobile Alley Historic District, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma, consists of the following property. Except as specified otherwise, the boundary is along the center lines of the alley and street rights-of-way:

Beginning on West Park Place at the alley east of North Broadway Avenue, then
south 1½ blocks along that alley to the alley between Northwest 9th and Northwest 10th, then
east along that alley to the east side of 25 Northwest 9th (the line between lots 36 and 37 block 11 Gault's Second Addition), then
south along the east side of 25 Northwest 9th to Northwest 9th, then
west along that street to the alley east of North Broadway Avenue, then
south 5 blocks along that alley to Northwest 4th, then
west along that street to North Broadway Avenue, then
north along that street to Northwest 5th, then
west along that street to the alley west of North Broadway Avenue, then
north 5 blocks along that alley to Northwest 10th, then
west along that street to the west side of 215 Northwest 10th (the line between lots 7 and 8 Florence Addition), then
north along the west side of 215 Northwest 10th to the alley north of Northwest 10th, then
east along that alley to the alley west of North Robinson Avenue, then
north along that alley to the north side of 1117 North Robinson Avenue (the line between lots 13 and 14 Turner's Subdivision of block 3 McClure's Addition), then
east along the north side of 1117 North Robinson Avenue to North Robinson Avenue, then
south along that street to the alley north of Northwest 10th, then
east along that alley to North Broadway Avenue, then
north along that street to West Park Place, then
east along that street to the alley east of North Broadway Avenue, the point of beginning.

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Automobile Alley Historic District
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Boundary Justification

The Automobile Alley Historic District includes North Broadway Avenue from Northwest 4th to West Park Place, which includes the concentration of extant commercial buildings, mostly brick one- and two-story Commercial Style buildings, that were used for automobile dealerships and suppliers during the period of significance. The extension west on Northwest 10th includes additional automobile-related buildings of the period of significance. The building on the extension on Northwest 9th provides visual continuity across a vacant block face on Broadway, and its use as an automobile dealer included a sales lot on part of that vacant space. Broadway Avenue north of the Broadway Circle / Park Place intersection is of a different character, with a park on one side and new buildings on the other. Broadway south of 4th (except for one block on the west side) consists of open space and new construction resulting from 1970s Urban Renewal. The areas outside the district do not have as strong an association with the automobile and most do not possess the same level of historic integrity.

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Automobile Alley Historic District
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Maps

The Automobile Alley Historic District is on the Oklahoma City USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle map; boundaries of the district are marked.

Maps of the district:

Contributing and Noncontributing
Dates of Construction
Photograph Locations

Photographs: Identification written on each photo is abbreviated; the full description is:

Address(es)

Automobile Alley Historic District
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Date: September 1996 or August 1997

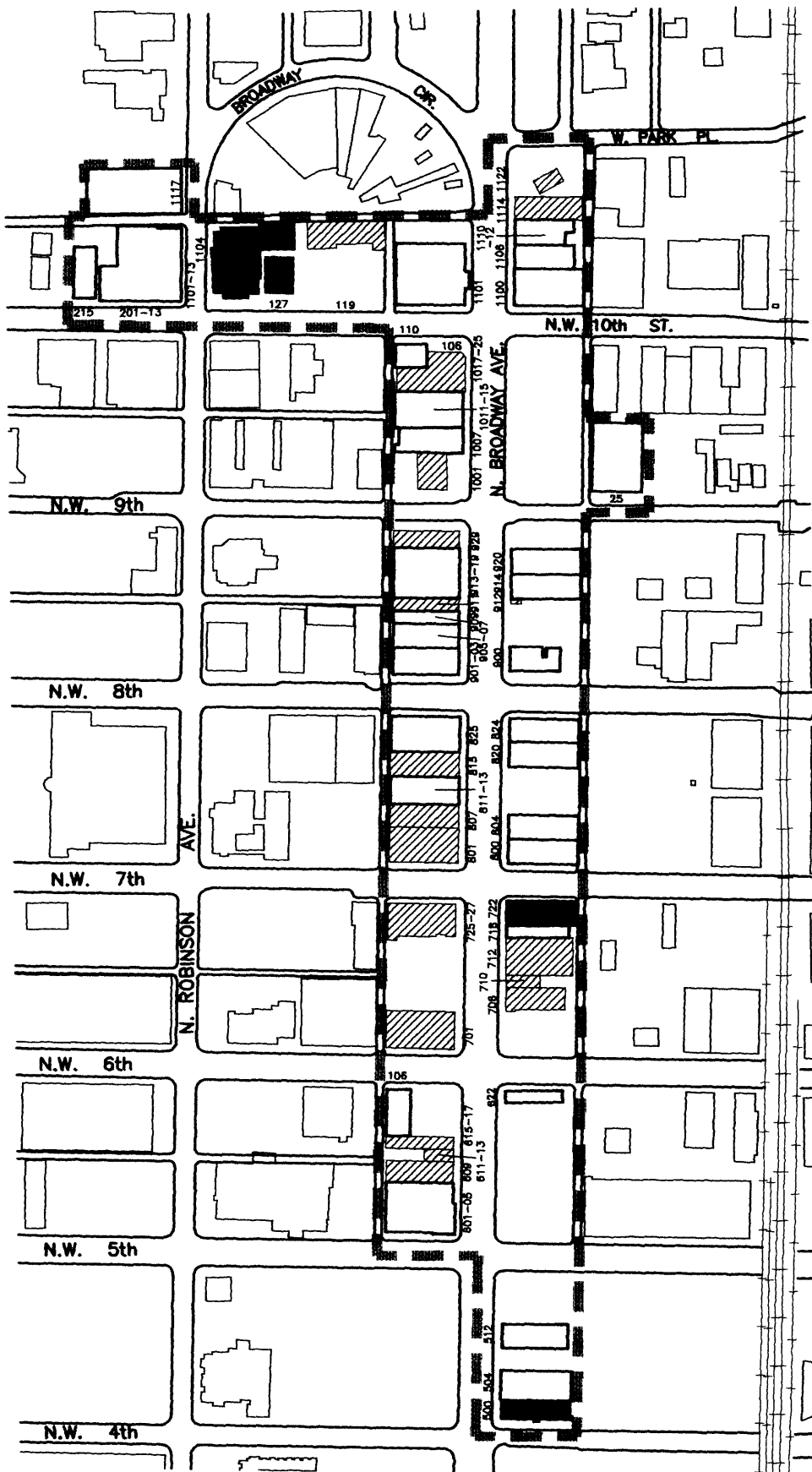
Photographer: City of Oklahoma City Planning Department

Negative at Oklahoma SHPO

Direction: See map

Photo number

Aerial photograph



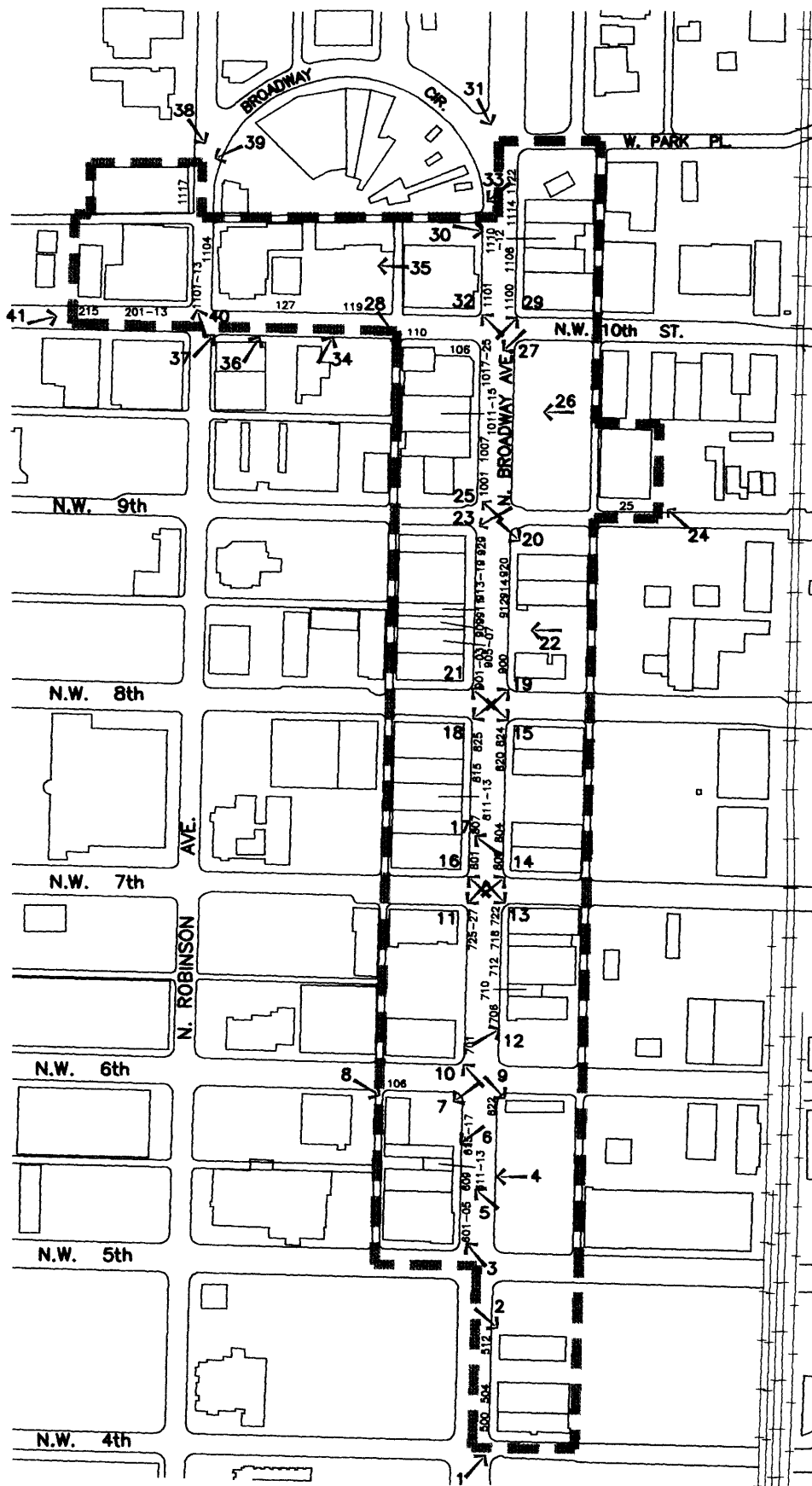
AUTOMOBILE ALLEY HISTORIC DISTRICT

Significance

- Listed in National Register
- Contributing
- Non-contributing
- District Boundary

Prepared By: The City of Oklahoma City,
Planning Department

June, 1998



AUTOMOBILE ALLEY HISTORIC DISTRICT

Photo Locations

- ← Photo Location
24 Photo Number

■ District Boundary

Prepared By: The City of Oklahoma City,
Planning Department

October, 1997

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>31</u>	<u>18</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>31</u>	<u>18</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 4

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

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Automobile Alley Historic District
name of property
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
county and State

Automobile Alley Historic District

(Listed on the National Register of Historic Places 3/18/99)
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County (109), Oklahoma (OK)

Amendment to Contributing/Noncontributing Resources Classification:


929 North Broadway Avenue (on page 20 of the nomination and depicted in photograph #23) was listed as a noncontributing resource due to non-original stucco siding of an unknown date.

Further research utilizing Sanborn Fire Insurance maps yields the information that the scored parget coating on the building was part of a "modernization" that took place prior to 1947, within the period of significance for the Automobile Alley Historic District. The effect was to create a streamlined, modern surface on a c. 1917 building. The former appearance was of a typical Commercial Style building with transom windows and a projecting cornice. The parget coat and removal of the cornice brought 929 North Broadway more in line with the popular commercial architecture of the 1940's. Although alterations have been made to the displays and entry subsequent to the 1940's remodel, the building retains sufficient integrity of location, setting, design, feeling, and association to be a contributing resource to the Automobile Alley Historic District.

Therefore, this documentation is submitted to establish 929 North Broadway Avenue as a contributing resource within the Automobile Alley Historic District.

8-17-99

Date



Bob L. Blackburn

State Historic Preservation Officer

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